

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. – 17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 72) An isolated nucleic acid comprising any one of the following:

- (a) a nucleic acid sequence encoding a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 16; or
- (b) a nucleic acid sequence at least 90% identical to the nucleic acid sequence of (a) above;
- (c) ~~a nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide wherein the polypeptide has conservative amino acid substitutions to the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 16; or~~
- (d) ~~a fragment of the nucleic acid sequence of (a) or (b) above wherein the fragment comprises at least 20 nucleotides.~~

19. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 73) The nucleic acid of claim 72 18, wherein said nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of DNA and RNA.

20. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 74) The nucleic acid of claim 72 18, wherein said nucleic acid comprises an open reading frame that encodes a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 16 or its complement, or a mutant or variant thereof.

21. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 75) The nucleic acid of claim 72 18 wherein said nucleic acid encodes a polypeptide comprising an amino acid of SEQ ID NO: 16 or its complement.

22. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 76) The nucleic acid of claim 74 20 wherein the nucleic acid encodes a mature form of a ~~the~~ polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is of SEQ ID NO: 16.

23. – 26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 81) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim ~~72~~ 18.

28. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 82) A cell comprising the vector of claim ~~81~~ 27.

29. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 83) The cell of claim 82 wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell comprising the nucleic acid sequence ~~which is of~~ SEQ ID NO: 15, ~~its complement, or a mutant or variant thereof.~~

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 85) A process for producing a polypeptide encoded by the nucleic acid of claim ~~72~~ 18, said process comprising:

- (a) providing a cell comprising a vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim ~~72~~ 18;
- (b) culturing said cell under conditions sufficient to express said polypeptide; and
- (c) recovering said polypeptide,

thereby producing said polypeptide.

32. (Currently Amended – formerly claim 86) The process of claim ~~85~~ 31 wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell.

33. – 34. (Cancelled)

35. (New) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 15.

36. (New) An isolated nucleic acid consisting of a nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 15.